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ABSTRACT

The evolution of educational evaluation has been significantly influenced by the assumptions and procedures of educational research which, in turn, aspires to make educational practice scientific. The concept of education connoisseurship and education criticism is posited upon a different set of techniques. Connoisseurship is an appreciative art based on an awareness of the qualities of what one encounters and a comprehension of other states against which to contrast it. Criticism is the linguistic disclosure of the encounter. Connoisseurship and criticism, already within the realm of the teacher, should be fostered because connoisseurship is capable of refinement, provides a level of consciousness that makes intellectual clarity possible, reveals new subject matter for both theoretical and empirical research, and requires an artful use of language that must come through an appreciative consiousness as well as an understanding of educational practice. Trust in educational criticism can be generated by comparing the criticism with the phenomena being described or with what one has experienced. The acceptance of this mode of evaluation to supplement traditional education research requires the application of the concept to the classroom. (JH)

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THE PERCEPTIVE EYE: TOWARD THE REFORMATION OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION[1]

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The major focus of my remarks this afternoon will be upon the description of a new form of evaluation that could have important consequences for the conduct of educational practice. In deciding to address myself to educational evaluation I in no way intend to back off from the perhaps more complicated problems involved in the design of curriculum. I focus upon evaluation because I believe that there is an intimate relationship between the assumptions and procedures we employ to assess educational effectiveness and the kinds of programs that we offer. Indeed, I would like to persuade you this afternoon that the assumptions and procedures used in conventional forms of educational evaluation have, in the main, been parochial. They represent an extremely narrow conception of the way in which educational evaluation can be pursued.

Those of you who are familiar with the evolution of the evaluation field already know that it has been significantly influenced by the assumptions and procedures employed in doing educational research. And educational research in turn took as its model the natural sciences and had as its aspiration the development of theory and methods that would make educational practice scientific. This aspiration is alive and well today. Indeed, this Association provides living testimony to that fact. We still aspire to create a scientifically managed form of educational practice.

Yet, scientific procedures are not the only forms through which human understanding is secured and scientific methods are not the only ways through which human influence can be confidently created. What I would like to do this afternoon is to suggest, perhaps not so much an alternative, but surely a needed supplement to the use of scientific

procedures for describing, interpreting and evaluating educational settings. I do this because I believe that the development of new educational programs and their effective assessment require a much wider set of assumptions and practices than we possess at present. I call this new, non-scientific approach to educational evaluation an approach that requires educational connoisseurship and educational criticism.[2,3] The remainder of what I have to say will be devoted to defining the meaning of these terms and to describing the way in which they can be used to evaluate educational settings.

What is Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism?

What I propose starts not with a scientific paradigm but with an artistic one. I start with the assumption that the improvement of education will result not so much by discovering methods that can be applied universally to classrooms throughout the land, or to individuals possessing particular personality characteristics, or to students coming from specific ethnic or class backgrounds, but rather by enabling teachers and others engaged in education to learn how to see and think about what they do. Educational practice as it occurs in schools is an inordinately complicated affair filled with contingencies that are extremely difficult to predict, let alone control. Connoisseurship in education, as in other areas, is that art of perception that makes the appreciation of such complexity possible. Connoisseurship is an appreciative art. Appreciation in this context means not necessarily a liking or preference for what one has encountered, but rather an awareness of its qualities, the relationships among its qualities, and a comprehension of the other states and values

against which the presently encountered state can be compared and contrasted.

Take an example of connoisseurship in a realm simpler than education, that of wine connoisseurship. The wine connoisseur has through long and careful attention to wine developed a gustatory palate that enables him to discern its most subtle qualities. When he drinks wine it is done with an intention to discern, and with a set of techniques that he employs to examine the range of qualities within the wine upon which he will make his judgments. Body, color, nose, aftertaste, bite, flavor, these are some of the attributes to which the wine connoisseur attends. In addition, he brings to bear upon his present experience a gustatory memory of other wines tasted. These other wines, held in the memory, form the backdrop for his present experience with a particular vintage. It is through his refined palate, his knowledge of what to look for, his backlog of previous experience with wines other than those he is presently drinking that differentiates his level of discernment from that of an ordinary drinker of wine. His conclusions about the quality of wines are judgments, not mere preferences. Judgments, unlike preferences which are incorrigible, can be grounded in reasons, reasons that refer back to the wines' qualities and to other wines of the same variety.

Connoisseurship in other fields share principles similar to those of wine connoisseurship. Connoisseurship in cabinet-making, for example, requires a similar ability to place what one currently examines into a context of cabinets one has already seen. What is the quality of the varnish that has been used? How many coats have been applied? What about the construction? Have the joints been dovetailed, doweled, finger-lapped or

tenoned? Are the edges banded and so on. Knowing what to look for, being able to discern skill, form, and imagination are some of the distinguishing traits of connoisseurship.

When it comes to the fine arts, even more is required for connoisseurship to be exercised. Works of art have a history, develop in a social context, and frequently possess a profundity in conception and execution that surpasses wine and cabinets. The poetry of ee cummings, the music of Stravinsky, the cinematography of Fellini and Bergman, the plays of Ibsen and Genet, the paintings of Rothko; connoisseurship with respect to these creations goes well beyond the use of awakened sensibility. Such works require an ability to recognize both how and why they depart from conventional modes in their respective art forms. To recognize such a departure requires an understanding not only of the forms the various arts have taken in the past but also an understanding of the intentions and leading conceptions underlying such works. The problems the artist formulates differ from period to period: the problems of Cezanne are not those of Duccio or Bellini or Motherwell. To appreciate the work of such men requires, therefore, not only attention to the formal qualities that constitute their work, but also an understanding of the ideas that gave rise to the work in the first place. This in turn requires some understanding of the socio-cultural context in which these artists worked, the sources from which they drew, and the influence their work had upon the work of others.

What we have in such connoisseurship is the application of a very complex intellectual net which is used reflectively by the connoisseur as he or she attends to his experience with the works he has encountered. In many

of the great works of art the intellectual breakthroughs in conception and realization are not worn as labels on their sleeves.

If connoisseurship is the art of appreciation, criticism is the art of disclosure. What the critic aims at is not only to discern the character and qualities constituting the object or event in his or her area of expertise -- this is a necessary but insufficient condition for criticism -- the critic also aims at providing a rendering in linguistic terms of what it is that he or she has encountered in such a way that others not possessing his level of connoisseurship can also enter into the work. Dewey put it nicely when he said, "The end of criticism is the re-education of the perception of the work of art."[4] Given this view of criticism -- a view which I share -- the function of criticism is educational. Its aim is to lift the veils that keep the eyes from seeing by providing the bridge needed by others to discern the qualities and relationships within some arena of activity. In this sense criticism requires connoisseurship but connoisseurship does not require the skills of criticism. One can function as a connoisseur without uttering a word about what has been experienced. Enjoyments can be private; one can relish or feel disdain in solitude. Criticism, on the contrary, is a public art. The critic must talk or write about what has been encountered; he must, in Kozloff's terms,[5] provide a rendering of the qualities that constitute the work, the import that it possesses and the quality of his experience as he interacts with it.

This enterprise of using language to express or render what is largely ineffable poses something of a paradox. Objects and events are what they are and not other things. And works of art, especially visual art and

music, are precisely aimed at forms of presentation and disclosure that are incapable of linguistic translation. There is no linguistic equivalent to Handel's Watermusik. How then does the critic proceed? If works of art are not translatable, how can they be described?

Coping with this problem resides at the heart of critical discourse. The critic must provide a description of the indescribable. How is this done? First, the aim of translating an object or event into its linguistic equivalent is foregone as an unattainable aim for criticism. Such translation is not possible. What is possible is a rendering, or linguistic set of pointers, a poetic form of analogue that suggests and adumbrates rather than literally describes what is there to be seen. This process, itself an art, requires the critic to create metaphoric as well as descriptive cues that are in some way experientially analogous to the work being criticized. The aim of the activity is less a matter of issuing value judgments about the quality of the work, although such judgments in varying degrees inhere in the critical act itself, than it is a matter of making the work vivid. The language of effective criticism is a language of disclosure. Its adequacy is measured by the brightness of its illumination. In saying that the aim of criticism is illumination more than it is evaluation, I do not imply that no evaluation goes on in criticism. Criticism, like connoisseurship, requires some frame of reference, some conception of the significant and the trivial, hence values inevitably enter into the doing of criticism. Yet, the emphasis in criticism can be and often is more descriptive than evaluative. The first obligation of the critic is to function as a midwife to perception.

Let's look at a piece of criticism by Max Kozloff as he describes his vis to an exhibition of paintings by the contemporary British painter, Francis Bacon:

> Wandering up and down the ramp of the Francis Bacon exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum on a sunny afternoon is a grisly experience. The joys of painting and the presence of a brilliant mind are not enough to dispel one's morbid embarrassment, as if one had been caught, and had caught oneself, smiling at a hanging.
>
> ... Earlier I was aware of his velvety, featherlike white strokes, which tickle the navy blue ground and form an urgent image all in their own time, only as an irritant. It is irritating, that is, to be cajoled, wheedled and finally seduced into an enjoyment of a painted scene whose nature connotes only horror or repulsion. Such are his various tableaux of crucifixion and murder, although his merely voyeuristic glimpses of male orgies arouse guilt in this same way.[6]

Kozloff's language is notable on several grounds. First, the language itself, independent of its relationship to Bacon's paintings, is sufficiently rich and vivid almost to enable the reader to experience the quality of what Bacon's work must be like even if one had never seen Bacon's paintings. Like a good storyteller, Kozloff himself paints linguistically a visually vivid picture of what he has encountered. Second, Kozloff not only tells us about the quality of the paint, the feathery character of the artist's brush strokes, the quality of the color that the paintings possess, he also attends to his own experience, its quality, its mood, its voyeuristic feeling, "as if one had been caught smiling at a hanging." Kozloff lets us in on not only the qualities of the work, but on the qualities of his experience when he interacts with it. Third, notice the kind of language that Kozloff uses to render the work. It's a language filled with metaphor and with unlikely analogies -- "smiling at a hanging." This use of metaphorical language is at base poetic. Metaphor is the recognition of underlying

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commonality in what is usually considered discreet and independent. The sudden recognition of such commonalities through the vehicle of metaphor provides a bridge between the metaphoric referent and the work and provides the conditions through which insight is generated. This new insight itself has aesthetic consequences for the reader of criticism as well as serving as a cue or guide for perceiving the work's qualities. Fourth, critical language often employs a backdrop of socio-cultural dialogue against which a particular work, ecollection of works or an artistic movement or style can be placed. Recognition of the significance of a movement or style requires attention not only to the qualities of particular works but also to why these qualities, at this particular phase of human history, have or fail to have import. For such judgments knowledge of the socio-cultural context is indispensable.

Both connoisseurship and critiricism employ, by necessity, an array of values that focus perception and guide linguistic emphasis. One of the essential characteristics of human perception is that it is selective. One cannot look at everything at once and although characteristics of the perceptual field itself play a role in guiding perception, the leading ideas about the arts, wine or cabinetmaking also perform a role in focusing attention. These leading ideas and values about what counts in an arena of activity grow from tradition and habit as well as from implicit and explicit theories about the nature of artistic virtue. In the fine arts such theories explicitly emanate from the work of aestheticians and implicitly from the critics themselves. When Roger Fry lauds "significant form", he calls the critics' attention to the formal structure of the work; when Bernard Berenson

applauds "tactile qualities", he reminds us that solidity and volume are crucial considerations in works of visual art; when Leo Tolstoy tells us that good art is sincere, clear and that it establishes a communion among men's feelings, he draws our attention to moral and ethical considerations that flow from our encounters with art.

The lesson to be learned here is that sheer description, unguided by value considerations is rudderless. Seeking and selecting require guideposts. In the arts aesthetic theory provides them.

What is the Relationship of Connoisseurship and Criticism to the Study of Educational Phenomena?

Thus far I have devoted my attention to the concepts of connoisseurship and criticism. But what is the relationship of these concepts to education? How can practices useful in the arts be usefully employed in studying the conduct of classrooms? It is to these questions that we now turn our attention.

It is an old truism that scientific studies in education are more often defined by the form of research one has learned to use than by the substantive problems one believes to be significant. Becoming familiar with correlation procedures too often leads simply to questions about what one can correlate; the existence of statistically reliable achievement tests too often leads to a conception of achievement that is educationally eviscerated. Our tools, as useful as they might be initially, often become our masters. Indeed, what it means to do any type of research at all in education is defined, stamped, sealed and approved by utilizing particular premises and procedures. A brief excursion into the pages of the American Educational

Research Journal will provide living testimony to the range of such premises and procedures. For example, during the past three volume years the AERJ has published over 100 articles. Of these only three were non-statistical in character.

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Yet the range, richness and complexity of educational phenomena occurring within classrooms are wider than what can be measured. Some phenomena can only be rendered. It is this richness and this complexity to which educational connoisseurship addresses itself. Just what are the qualities of engagement between teacher and students? What kind of educational life is being led by those who share a major portion of their waking hours together? How articulate and intelligent is the discourse that pervades the classroom? What engines motivate the actions of teacher and students?

In a very real sense educational connoisseurship to some degree is practiced daily by educational practitioners. The teacher's ability, for example, to judge when children have had enough of art, math, reading or "free time" is a judgment made not by applying a theory of motivation or attention, but by recognizing the wide range of qualities that the children themselves display to those who have learned to see. Walk down any school corridor and peek through the window; an educational connoisseur can quickly discern important things about life in that classroom. Of course judgments, especially those made through windows from hallways, can be faulty. Yet the point remains. With experience in learning how to see what one looks at, an active network of information -- what Stephen Pepper refers to as "danda" in contrast to "data"[7] -- can be secured. The teacher who cannot

distinguish between the noise of children working and just plain noise has not yet developed a basic level of educational connoisseurship.

Listen to the shop talk of teachers, the kind of discourse they carry on in the lounge; their shop talk reveals the application of their own levels of connoisseurship to the settings in which they work. If teachers and school administrators already possess educational connoisseurship, then why try to foster it? There are several reasons. In the first place connoisseurship, like any art, is capable of refinement. Teachers on their own -- like all of us -- develop whatever connoisseurship they can or need. What is obvious, by definition, we learn to recognize easily and early. What is subtle and complex we might never perceive. As Ryle[8] has pointed out, seeing is not an act but an achievement. Seeing is a realization secured. Unfortunately, one of the consequences of familiarity is the development of obliviousness. We learn not to see, we turn off what we have become accustomed to. Thus, a teacher with years of experience in the classroom or a school administrator with a decade behind the desk might develop only enough educational connoisseurship to enable them to cope at minimal levels within the classroom and school in which they work. Being oblivious to a large portion of their environment they are in no position to bring about change, to rectify educational ills they cannot see, or to alter their own behavior. What is even worse, the conditions and qualities that they do see they might believe to be natural rather than artifactual. We often come to believe, because of habit reinforced by convention, that the way things are, are the way they must be. More refined levels of educational connoisseurship could militate against such seductive comforts.

In the second place connoisseurship when developed to a high degree provides a level of consciousness that makes intellectual clarity possible. Many teachers are confronted daily with prescriptions and demands from individuals outside the teaching profession that are intended to improve the quality of education within the schools. Many of these demands the teachers feel in their gut to be misguided or wrong-headed; the demands somehow fly in the face of what they feel to be possible in a classroom or in the best interests of children. Two examples should suffice. The pressures toward accountability defined in terms of specific operational objectives and precise measurement of outcomes are pressures that many teachers dislike. Their distaste for these pressures is not due to professional laziness, recalcitrance or stupidity, but is due to the uneasy feeling that as rational as a means-ends concept of accountability appears to be, it doesn't quite fit the educational facts with which they live and work. Many teachers, if you ask them, are unable to state why they feel uneasy. They have a difficult time articulating what the flaws are in the often glib prescriptions that issue from state capitols and major universities. Yet, the uneasiness is often, not always, but often justified. Some objectives one cannot articulate, some goals one does not achieve by the end of the academic year, some insights are not measurable, some ends are not known until after the fact, some models of educational practice violate some visions of the learner and the classroom. Many teachers have developed sufficient connoisseurship to feel that something is awry but have insufficient connoisseurship to provide a more adequate conceptualization of just what it is.

In the third place the development of higher levels of connoisseurship than we have in general at present might provide new subject matters not only for theoretical attention, but for empirical research of the conventional variety. Of what use is it to test a new method for the teaching of spelling to third graders if 15 per cent of the children, because of where their desks are placed, cannot see the blackboard? Significant effects in schooling might be the result of factors that experimenters do not see and cannot, therefore, control. Jackson notes, for example, that in elementary school classrooms when students come up to the teacher's desk for help, the teacher visually scans the classroom every 40 seconds or so.[9] He also notes that children seated on the periphery of the room tend to withdraw more -- out the window as it were -- than chidren seated up front or in the middle of the room. What do such behaviors mean for teaching and learning? What do they reveal about how children and teachers cope with the demands made upon them? These questions and others that could be raised grow out of the perceptive, critical observations that Jackson was able to make. These variables and others like them could provide new and productive leads for educational research. Such leads depend for their existence on the realizations that educational connoisseurship provides.

The end of criticism, unlike connoisseurship, is that of disclosure. Critics are people who talk in special ways about what they encounter. In educational settings criticism is the public side of connoisseurship. Criticism applied to classroom phenomena is the art of saying just what it is that is going on in that setting. Take, for example, that mode of human

performance called teaching. What is it that teachers do when they teach? How do they use themselves? How do they move? What level of tension, of affect, of spontaneity do they display? To what extent do they reveal themselves as persons to the students with whom they work? Are they approachable? In what ways? How, given questions such as these, can the qualities to which such questions guide us be disclosed? How can they be disclosed in a way that does not rob them of their vitality as experienced? Here the educational critic has a task similar to his counterpart dealing with live theater. The critic's task in each case is to provide a vivid rendering so that others might learn to see what transpires in that beehive of activity called the classroom. What the educational critic employs is a form of linguistic artistry replete with metaphor, contrast, redundancy, and emphasis that captures some aspect of the quality and character of educational life.

In this task the educational critic does far more than describe behavior. A strictly behavioral description of what teachers do would not only avoid dealing with the intentions of the teacher, it would also describe in quantitative terms the number of behavioral moves made by the teacher. Such a description is, of course, useful for some purposes, but it is not likely to capture the meaning or character of the teaching that has occurred. Such a description of behavior is "thin" and can be contrasted to what Geertz refers to as "thick" description.[10] Thick description aims at describing the meaning or significance of behavior as it occurs in a cultural network saturated with meaning. For example, a behavioral description of an eyelid closing on the left eye at the rate of two closures

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per second could be described in just that way. But a thick description of such behaviors within the context of a cultural subsystem could be described as a wink. The meaning of a wink, especially if the person at the other end is someone of the opposite sex, is entirely different from a description of eyelid closures at the rate of two closures per second. To fail to recognize the difference in the critical description of behavior is the same as neglecting the iconography used in works of visual art. The splash in the ocean in Breughel's painting, The Fall of Icarus, can be critically described only if one knows the story of Icarus. Once aware of the story, the signficance of the painting and the meaning of the splash becomes clear.

It is obvious that the creation of effective criticism requires the skillful use of language. Good critics use language in a way that requires a certain poetic and fluid range of words and phrases. Since the artful use of language is so important in the creation of criticism wouldn't it be reasonable to use professional writers or critics in fields other than education to create educational criticism. The answer to that question is no. While it must have a sense of linguistic fluency and imagination, criticism is more than simply using language artfully. In all fields, but especially in education, the need to understand the values and history beneath practices being employed is crucial. In educational settings the critic must be in a position not only to observe the superficial and apparent, but the subtle and covert. What is subtle and covert in classrooms is not by definition visible to an educationally naive eye. But even more, the educational critic needs to know what form of educational practice the particular practice he encounters represents so that the criteria he employs in describing that

practice is appropriate to it. One does not give low marks to a cubist painting because of a paucity of color; one does not condemn Monteverdi because his music does not have the melodic line of the romantics. Each form of an art needs to be appraised by the style it represents and the criteria appropriate to it. Classroom life and styles of teaching are no exceptions. There are many types of educational excellence and an educational critic should be familiar with them.

In addition to these competencies for the creation of adequate educational criticism, the educational critic needs to be able to recognize what was rejected as well as what was accepted when a teacher uses a particular approach in a classroom. What values are being embraced? What values are being rejected when one decides to use particular educational procedures? Given the values that appear to animate classroom practices, how might they have been employed? In short, competent educational criticism requires far more than the writing skills possessed by a good novelist or journalist. It requires a broad grasp of educational theory and educational history and it would be a distinct advantage for critics to have had experience as classroom teachers.

The point here is that criticism requires for its successful execution an understanding of the context, the symbols, the rules, and the traditions in which an object or event participates.[11] In educational criticism it requires an understanding of the range of educational styles possible in teaching, in organizing classrooms and schools, in using curriculum materials, and in providing educational activities. The educational critic employs an awareness of these possibilities to recognize the extent

to which what he encounters participates in them and the extent to which it departs from them. His vision of pedagogical virtue in each of these realms and others functions as a touchstone for the critical description of what he sees.

It is instructive to note that the type of connoisseurship and particularly the type of criticism I am describing does not have a firm or well developed tradition in schools of education. Such traditions do of course exist in highly sophisticated forms in literature, drama, the visual arts, poetry and music. And cinematography, the art form of the 20th century, is rapidly developing a tradition of criticism. The study of education in this country has evolved from different roots, those of social science. To do research in education has meant to do scientific work. To have evidence regarding educational practice has meant to have scientific evidence. Those whose interests and aptitudes for studying educational phenomena veered toward the humanistic or artistic modes of conception and expression have, unfortunately, too often been thought of as woolly-headed, impressionistic romantics. Educational connoisseurship and criticism have not been encouraged. An ounce of data it seems has been worth a pound of insight.

Can Educational Criticism Be Trusted?

One of the persistent concerns of those who do conventional forms of educational research and evaluation centers around the reliability of the instruments used. How can one be confident that the performance of individuals or groups being sampled are representative or consistent? How can one be sure that the judgments made by experts are reliable? The

question of the dependability of criticism is, too, a concern of those doing criticism. How can we be sure that what educational critics say about educational phenomena is not a figment of their imagination? By what method shall we determine what confidence we can place in the critic's description, interpretation and evaluation of the phenomena he treats?

The problem of determining the reliability of the critic's language is addressed by judging the referential adequacy of what he has to say. This is done by empirically testing his remarks against the phenomena he attempts to describe. Criticism has as its major aim the reeducation of perception. Therefore, the language used to describe educational phenomena, such as teaching, should disclose aspects of that performance that might otherwise not be seen. The critic's language is referentially adequate when its referents can be found in the work or event itself. If a group of readers cannot find these referents in what has transpired, it may be due to 1) poor critical talk, 2) critical talk that is inappropriate for the competencies of the audience listening to it or reading it, 3) because what the critic thinks he sees is simply not going on, or 4) because the audience is so unprepared to perceive that a much more powerful educational program for that audience is needed. Poor critical language or inappropriate language for a given audience are problems from which any type of study can suffer. Conventional forms of educational research might also be so poorly articulated that they become incomprehensible. The technical level of the discourse of conventional research might, similarly, be inappropriately sophisticated or prosaic for a given audience. Insofar as the products of man are to have educational consequences, the fit between

the audience and the message needs to be taken into account.

It is possible for critics to bring such bias to an encounter that they misread the situation. Their prior commitments function under exceptional circumstances as blinders rather than guides for seeing what is happening. But this liability, too, is not absent from conventional research. Theoretical convictions can lead one to gross misinterpretations of classroom life and biases towards particular modes of statistical analyses or forms of testing can also create distortions in the state of affairs encountered. The tools we use are not simply neutral entities but have distinctive effects on the quality of our perceptions and upon our understanding.

Referential adequacy, as already indicated, is determined by examining the fit between what the critic says and the phenomena he describes. This fit is often, but not always, secured by the degree of the critic's metaphorical precision. Reading a critic's description of a teacher or a classroom should lead to a deeper and more penetrating awareness of what was transpiring there. Good criticism brings with it a kind of "ah ha!" experience.

When one deals with works of visual art and works of literature there exists a certain stability in the material studied. But what do we do with things and events that change over time; classrooms, for instance? How can something as fluid as a classroom be critically described and how can such descriptions be tested for their referential adequacy? It should be noted that stageplays and orchestra performances, too, share some of the fluidity of the classroom or school, yet these art forms have a long

critical history. What I believe must be done to fairly test the referential adequacy of critical discourse is two-fold. First, the classrooms being studied need to be visited with sufficient persistency to enable the critic to locate its pervasive qualities; those qualities through which aspects of its life can be characterized. Classrooms or schools are not so fugitive that their pervasive qualities change on a daily basis. What is enduring in a classroom is more likely to be educationally significant than what is evanescent. These enduring or pervasive qualities can become objects of critical attention. An educational connoisseur should be able to perceive what the critic has described when given the opportunity to do so.

Second, the availability of videotape recordings and cinematography now make it possible to capture and hold episodes of classroom life that can be critically described. Such videotaped episodes can then be compared with the criticism created and its referential adequacy determined. In addition, playback features of videotape make it possible to scrutinize expression, tempo, explanation, and movement in ways that live situations will not permit. Disputes about the adequacy of the criticism can be resolved, at least in principle, by reexamining particular segments of the tape. The technology now available lends itself exceedingly well to the work to be done.

One might well ask whether educational connoisseurship and criticism are likely to lead to useful generalizations about educational practice. Can the study of a handful of non-randomly selected classrooms yield conclusions that apply to classrooms other than the ones studied? The answer to these questions is complex. Insofar as the application of critical

procedures discloses subtle, but important phenomena that other classrooms and teachers share, then of course the gist of critical disclosure is applicable. But the only way to know that is to be able to learn from critical discourse what might be worth looking for in other educational situations. In other words, if it is true that the universal does indeed reside in the particulars which artistic activity constructs, the renderings of those constructions in critical language should open up aspects of classroom life that participate in such universals. To know that requires itself a sense of connoisseurship. Unlike the automatic application of a standard, what one learns from effective criticism is both a content within a particular classroom and a refined sensibility concerning classrooms that is useful for studying other educational situations.

There is another way in which effective connoisseurship and criticism might yield warranted generalizations and that is as cues useful for locating phenomena that might be subsequently pursued through conventional educational research. Creative scientific work in any field depends upon new realizations, new models or new methods to guide inquiry. Insofar as effective criticism reveals aspects of educational phenomena that were previously unnoticed or underestimated, a fresh focus for conventional scientific study could be provided.

Thus far I have emphasized the similarities between criticism in the arts and crticism in education. But the fine arts are not identical to educational settings and determining the extent to which criticism in the arts can also be applied to education is something which needs to be determined. For example, art critics deal with completed works of art, not work

in progress. The art critic looks at a completed painting, the music critic a finished symphony, and so forth. An educational critic has no such complete whole. Classroom activities flow into one another, seldom do classroom events form a completed whole. If this is true, what bearing does it have upon the doing of educational criticism?

Critics in the arts work within a long tradition, they have at their disposal a tradition of critical writing, a language that is sharable and a set of terms that have conventional meaning within the arts: impressionism, surrealism, constructivism, baroque, line, color, value, composition are conventional signs that those working in the arts understand. To what extent do we in education have similar terms and a comparable tradition? Is such a tradition possible and desirable in describing educational settings? Why hasn't one comparable to the arts been created? Are there differences between the criticism of the arts and of classrooms that make such a tradition unlikely?

In the world of the arts, critics have established themselves as one of its inhabitants; art critics and art criticism are expected. Will teachers, school administrators, parents, educational theoreticians and educational researchers accept educational criticism and educational critics? Will commitment to scientific objectivity lead to a rejection of criticism as a method of studying in education? Will teachers be able to use what critics provide? To what extent can educational criticism contribute to more effective teaching? What hampers critics from doing effective criticism when they have the opportunity to observe classrooms?

These questions and others like them need attention if the uses and

limitations of educational connoisseurship and criticism are to be understood. At present it seems to me the concepts provide promise, but whether in fact their promise will be realized requires the application of the concepts to the classroom. That, it seems to me, is an appropriate agenda not only for students of educational evaluation, but for anyone interested in the design and improvement of educational programs.

4. John Dewey, Art as Experience. New York: Morton, Balch and Company. 1934.

5. Max Kozloff, Renderings. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1969.

6. Ibid.

7. Stephen Pepper, The Basis of Criticism in the Arts. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1945.

8. Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind. New York: Barnes and Noble. 1949.

9. Phillip Jackson, Life in Classrooms. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1968.

10. The concepts of "thick" and "thin" description were first encountered by me in listening to a paper by Clifford Geertz given at Stanford University in 1974.

11. The study of symbols as used in the arts is called iconography and is perhaps best exemplified in the work of Erwin Panofsky. See, for example, his book, Meaning in the Visual Arts. New York: Overlook Press. 1974.

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FOOTNOTES

1. This paper has benefited from the perceptive criticism of more individuals than it would be possible for me to name. However, I want to express my special gratitude to my friend, Professor Alan Peshkin of the University of Illinois-Urbana, for particularly helpful suggestions. The material contained herein will appear in the author's forthcoming book, The Design and Evaluation of Educational Programs, to be published by Macmillan Publishing Co., New York.

2. The term connoisseurship has some unfortunate connotations which I would like to disspell within the context of the work proposed. One such connotation is that of an effete, elite consumer or snob; something belonging to the upper classes. Connoisseurship, as I use the term, relates to any form of expertise in any area of human endeavor and is as germane to the problems involved in purse snatching as it is in the appreciation of fine needlepoint.

   Similarly, criticism gives some people the impression of a harping, hacking, negativistic attitude towards something. This is not the way in which the term is used in this project. Criticism is conceived of as a generic process aimed at revealing the characteristics and qualities that constitute any human product. Its major aim is to enable individuals to recognize qualities and characteristics of a work or event which might have gone unnoticed and therefore unappreciated.

3. The concepts educational connoisseurship and educational criticism have evolved from conceptual work extending over the past decade. Those interested in this work might refer to:

   Elliot W. Eisner, "Qualitative Intelligence and the Act of Teaching," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 73, No. 6. March 1963.

   Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Instructional Objectives, W. James Popham, et al. American Educational Research Association Monograph #3. Chicago: Rand McNally and Co. 1969.

   Elliot W. Eisner, "Emerging Models for Educational Evaluation," School Review, Vol. 80, No. 4. August 1972.

   Elliot W. Eisner, English Primary Schools: Some Observations and Assessments. Washington: National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1974.

   Elliot W. Eisner, "The Future of the Secondary School: A Viewpoint," Banff Conference on the Future of Secondary Education in Canada, proceedings in press, 1975.

   These concepts are being operationalized by my students and me at Stanford University in the study of elementary and secondary school classrooms.